

Ethics Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 9, 2016

Members Present:

X	Dan Chasse	X	Peter Lyford
	Don Dufour	X	Todd Martin
X	Joe Ferris		Cathy Taylor
X	Kim Lane	X	Patti Dubois

The meeting was called to order. City Clerk Dubois distributed a members' contact sheet, a list of committees and their members and a list of towns who have offered their Ethics Policy and/or Ordinance samples.

Peter Lyford suggested that we keep track of legal questions and provide them to Bill Lee for response. It was discussed that the committee may need some guidance from Bill as to how the City's Personnel Ordinance and Ethics Ordinance will mesh, since the Personnel Ordinance relates to city employees and the Ethics Ordinance will apply to elected and appointed officials, and city employees. At some point, it was agreed that we may want to invite Bill to a future meeting for clarification of the committee's scope of work. All agreed that any draft ordinance will be submitted to Bill for review.

Kim Lane pointed out that the City's Harassment Policy didn't include any verbiage about tolerance. She suggested that this policy may need to be updated. Members present agreed that a list of recommendations be compiled to summarize any issues or conflicts found with existing city policies or ordinances.

Discussion then shifted to the details of the Ethics Committee, and that the proposed ordinance should include quorum requirements, due process including specific timelines for action, an appeals process and penalties for violation. Member Lyford questioned how committee members would be indemnified from personal liability. Clerk Dubois guessed aloud that members would be covered by the Tort Claims Act, but that she would verify that with Bill Lee.

Peter Lyford indicated that he had reviewed the materials in advance, and that he felt that we should use the Town of Windham's Ethics Policy as a starting point, since he felt that it was a good sample, which included detailed state statutes references and policy references. All present agreed to use this document as a starting point. Lyford suggested that we find out how many times the Windham Ethics Committee meets, and whether we could actually attend a future meeting for feedback. Clerk Dubois will contact Windham for this meeting information and to get this document in word format.

There was a consensus from members present to go through the Windham ordinance one section at a time, and make any necessary changes. Members can research other policies and ordinances individually, and bring language regarding specific topics/sections to the group for discussion. Although email can be used to share information in advance of an upcoming meeting, members were reminded to use caution so that back and forth discussions do not result, which is a violation of the Freedom of Information Act.

Discussion turned to a timeline for the group to finalize a draft ordinance. Member Lyford suggested a target date of June 21<sup>st</sup> to get an ordinance to the City Council. A meeting schedule was set to be the first and third Wednesdays of each month, at 4:45; however, the date of April 20<sup>th</sup> was canceled due to school vacation week and replaced with April 27<sup>th</sup>. A maximum meeting length of 1 1/2 hours was agreed upon. The next meeting date was scheduled for March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Absent members Cathy Taylor and Don Dufour had both suggested that they would support Peter Lyford as Chair. Members present concurred. Lyford suggested that a Vice-Chair might be helpful, but it was agreed to put that decision off until all members were in attendance.

It was agreed that the meeting agenda for March 2<sup>nd</sup> be as follows:

- Recap of last meeting (2/9/16)
- Questions/ideas
- Overview of the Windham Ordinance
  - What's included
  - What's excluded

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.